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Attorney General Frosh Works to Stop International Scam Calls

BALTIMORE, MD (January 10, 2022) – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today urged the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to put in place measures that will help stem the tide of foreign-based illegal robocalls that attempt to scam Americans.

“Americans are sick and tired of spoofed phone calls and illegal robocalls, of not being able to trust their Caller ID, and of being scammed by bad actors from all over the world,” said Attorney General Frosh. “We are asking the FCC to swiftly implement measures that protect Americans from these criminals.”

In a [comment letter](#) to the FCC, Attorney General Frosh and a bipartisan group of 51 attorneys general are calling for the FCC to require gateway providers – the companies that allow foreign calls into the United States – to take steps to reduce how easily robocalls have been able to enter the U.S. telephone network, including implementing STIR/SHAKEN, a caller ID authentication technology that helps prevent spoofed calls. Gateway providers should be required to implement this technology within 30 days of it becoming a rule to help eliminate spoofed calls and to make sure that international calls that originate from U.S. telephone numbers are legitimate. In August 2021, Attorney General Frosh and a coalition of 51 attorneys general [called for the FCC](#) to shorten by a year the deadline for smaller telephone companies to implement STIR/SHAKEN, a move the FCC did implement in December.

The attorneys general are asking the FCC to require these gateway providers to take additional measures to reduce robocalls, including:

- Responding to requests from law enforcement, state attorneys general, or the FCC to trace back calls within 24 hours;
- Blocking calls when providers are aware of an illegal or likely fraudulent caller;
- Blocking calls that originate from numbers that are on a “do not originate” list – such as government phone numbers that are for incoming calls only; and
- Ensuring that foreign telephone companies they partner with are ensuring that calls are being made from legitimate numbers.

The attorneys general are also encouraging the FCC to require all phone companies to block calls from a gateway provider if it fails to meet these requirements. Illegal robocalls are a scourge – in 2020, Americans lost more than \$520 million through robocall scams.

Attorney General Frosh is joined in sending this letter to the FCC by the attorneys general of Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

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